
hañt- and haiθiia- in the Old Avestan Texts

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Abstract

This article examines the usage and sense of hātqm ‘of beings’ and the adjective haiθiia- ‘true’, both from the present participle hañt- ‘being’, in the Old Avestan texts. It argues that the first is a rhetorical figure that enhances the stature of its complement and does not denote any particular kind of being whether divine or mortal. haiθiia- consistently appears in contexts that may be legitimately described as eschatological. Most often it qualifies a certain type of activity that leads to or constitutes a ‘splendid’ state of existence. What truly is, the article concludes, refers to existence beyond mortal life.

The verbal root *ah* ‘be’ gives us two troublesome Old Avestan terms: the present participle *hañt-* ‘being’ and the adjective *haiθiia-* ‘true’ or ‘real’ derived from it. The interpreter’s problem with these words is obviously not related to etymology but to usage and the actual sense they have in the passages where they occur. Since one can hardly be interested in their etymological ‘meanings’, we have to turn to the texts themselves and see what they can tell us about the significance of these words. There are two detailed contributions to this topic: one is by Narten (1982) in her book *Die Aməša Spəntas im Avesta*, and the other by Kellens (1989) in his article, ‘Le sens de vieil-avestique hātqm’, which is in effect a critical response to Narten’s work. There is also a shorter discussion of the issue by Kellens (1994) in his *Le panthéon de l’Avesta ancien*. Narten focuses on the participle and the finite form of \sqrt{ah} in the formulaic relative clause *yōi hañtī* ‘(those) who are’. Kellens discusses in addition the derived adjective, but very briefly, believing the matter to be settled with his findings regarding the participle and the relative phrase. My focus will be on the adjective, θ which I address after looking at the participle, the relative clause and their treatment by these two scholars. The issue for the two scholars is whether the relative phrase refers to human beings (Narten) or divine beings (Kellens).

The outcome has important consequences for the understanding of the Old Avestan texts. As it happens, the scholar’s overall view of the meaning and status of these texts defines the perspective in which particular passages are translated and understood, including the semantics and syntax, although rarely he or she is prepared to acknowledge it. One hopes, however, that we also allow ourselves to reassess our overall view in the light of the texts and the debates around particular topics. If one is convinced of the impertinence, let us say, of conceiving the Gāthās as sermons, does this mean that every addressee one comes across in

the text has to be a divine being? And if such is in fact the case, do the compositions have to be liturgies of the Vedic type? And if they are in fact similar to the R̥gveda poems, does this mean that they can only be about ritual? It seems to me that no less than the traditional view of the Gāthās as prophetic sermons, the view that makes them into liturgies that occasionally express few speculations about sacrifice is problematic, or at least yet to be demonstrated.¹

1. The participle *hañt-* and the relative *γōi hañtī* ‘(those) who are’

Johanna Narten (1982, pp. 80–97) has extensively examined the participle and the formulaic relative *γōi hañtī* ‘(those) who are’ (in Y 44.16, 45.6 and 51.10). Her view is unequivocal: “dient der Relativsatz... für den ein Bezugswort im Text fehlt, in der Bedeutung ‘(diejenigen,) die sind (existieren, leben)’ in den Gathas aber zweifellos zur Bezeichnung lebender Menschen” (p. 87). The gen. pl. form of the participle (as a partitive–genitive determining a superlative ‘als Steigerung’ in Y 29.3, 35.3 and 44.10) does not refer to gods either (p. 88): “bezeichnet *hātqm* an den beiden Gathastellen keine göttlichen Wesenheiten, wie sie durch den Satz *γōi aṅharēcā hañticā* charakterisiert werden”. Narten translates Y 44.16b’ *θβā pōi sēnghā γōi hañtī* “um durch deine Verkündigung (diejenigen,) die sind, zu schützen” with the relative clause as an accusative complement of the infinitive ‘to protect’; and Y 45.6b’ *γō hudā γōi hañtī* “der wohlwiegend ist (= Ahura Mazda) (für diejenigen), die sind” with the relative understood as subordinated to an elliptical dative pronoun. The relative phrase refers to human beings that are the object of divine care. In the same vein, the relative in 51.10 refers to human beings: *tā duždā γōi hañtī* “... (und) dadurch übelwiegend ist (für diejenigen), die sind” (p. 87). Thus in her view both the participle and the relative phrase refer to human beings.

Jean Kellens (1989, p. 50) argues on the other hand that the participle is a generic term that designates divine beings, i.e., the immortals, and the relative *γōi hañtī* is ‘un raccourci de **γōi aṅharēcā hañticā buuainticā*’ (p. 61): those “who have been, are and will be” (cf. Kellens 2000, pp. 109–111). Such beings must be divine. In this perspective Kellens reads the relative in Y 44.16 and 45.6 as a partitive–genitive complement, respectively, of *vəθrəm.jā* and *γō hudā*, an exact functional equivalent of *hātqm* “parmi les Existants” (p. 54). As for the adjective *haiθiia-*, “il faut admettre que, dans certaines de ses attestations vieil-avestiques, sinon dans toutes, il ne signifie pas ‘vrai’ ou ‘vérité’, mais est resté le dérivé tout à fait primaire de *hañt-*, donc ‘qui se rapporte aux *hañt* (= aux dieux)’ ou, en prenant quelque hauteur, ‘sacré’. C’est incontestablement le cas lorsqu’il qualifie *šiiāoθana-*, lequel, il faut bien le reconnaître, s’accommode mal de ‘vrai’ ou d’une de ses projections arbitraires, comme ‘sincère’ ou ‘juste’. L’exemple le plus explicite est fourni par le Y 30.5 *γāēcā xšnaošan ahurəm haiθiiaš šiiāoθanāiš fraorəz mazdqm* ‘et ceux qui satisfont Ahura Mazda avec empressement par les actes qu’ils adressent aux *hañt* (= par les actes du culte)’” (p. 58).

It appears that the disagreement is for the most part due to different interpretations of the syntax of the passages. Both readings are indeed justifiable as far as the syntax is concerned. As for *haiθiia-*, Kellens refers to Y 30.5 as an ‘incontestable’ evidence for his understanding of the adjective as sacred or cultic. Beyond the problem of the ambiguity of the function

¹See Ahmadi (2013).

of the relative, there are two assumptions that underlie the terms in which the matter has been handled by the two scholars and their disagreement. These assumptions in my mind remain unexamined: 1) the formulaic relative *γōi hāṇtī* and the participle *haṇt-* must have the same reference; and in the case of Kellens, 2) the derived adjective *haiθiia-* must semantically match the participle. As far as the latter issue is concerned, one must note that even if it turns out that the participle designates divine beings, still it does not follow that the adjective too must pertain to things cultic. The cognate Vedic adjective *satyá-* ‘true, real’ certainly does not only mean divine (cf. *EWA* 690 ‘wahr, wahrhaft, wirklich’); neither does Old Persian *hašiya-* ‘real, true’. The use of the participle to refer to the gods – even if, as I said, it turns out to be the case – could have been a development that postdates the formation of the adjective, while the latter continued its etymological career. Judging from relevant comparative evidence just mentioned, this is certainly a plausible scenario. As for the first assumption, the partitive-genitive function of the formulaic relative, even if it should refer to divinities, it does not mean that *hātqm* must likewise designate divine beings, because seemingly it performs an ‘equivalent function’.²

The relative phrase does seem to refer in the Gāthās to immortal beings, in view, firstly, of the formulaic nature of the relative clause. Kellens maintains that it is an abbreviation of “those who have been, are and will be”, which obviously refers to immortal beings. Whether this particular syntactic usage, e.g., lack of antecedent, signifies the formulaic end point of a poetic development is hard to determine, since the number of attestations is too small (three in all) to make a sound judgment. Nonetheless, if one accepts the view that our relative phrase is an abbreviation of something like **γōi āṇharacā hāṇticā buuainticā* one must acknowledge that it does refer to divine beings. We can imagine *Y 51.22 γōi āṇharacā hāṇticā* “who have been and are” used without correlative pronoun. The absence of antecedent is significant because it seems to occur in the Gāthās only under particular conditions, which may point to the formulaic nature of the relative.³ But if so, the relative phrase owes its semantics *not* to the sense of the verb as such *but* to its own poetic lineage. (The Old Persian phrase from Darius’ inscription at Bīstūn (DB IV 61) *utā aniyāha bagāha tyaiy haⁿtiy* “and other gods who are” may not be relevant if the relative here should be understood merely as a concessive expression of the existence of gods other than A^huramazdā: “and other gods who (might) exist”.) There is also a contextual argument for understanding the formulaic relative as referring to divinities. In *Y 44.16bb’ kē vərəθrēm.jā θβā pōi sənghā γōi hāṇtī*, the complement of the infinitive ‘to protect’, judging from the context *Y 44.15–19*, is in all probability the implied ‘me’ and not the relative phrase (subordinated to an elliptical antecedent) in an accusative role. In the extended passage the poet commends himself (e.g., *44.15 pōi maṭ*) in different manners and respects to the care of the divinity. If so, the only role available for the relative would be that of genitival determination of *vərəθrēm.jā* ‘smasher of obstacle’: “who (is) the smasher of obstacles among gods for protecting me in accordance

²See Kellens (1989, p. 54): “Ainsi, l’équivalence fonctionnelle entre *hātqm* et *γōi hāṇtī* compromet l’hypothèse selon laquelle le premier ne servirait le plus souvent qu’à majorer le superlatif et conforte vigoureusement celle qui reconnaît une désignation divine”.

³See Kellens and Pirart (1990, pp. 60–61). According to them there are five syntactic conditions under which the relative appears without antecedent.

with your declaration?” This is the only occurrence of the relative phrase where the context may shed some light on the semantics of the expression.

The case is different for *hātqm* ‘among or of beings’. In its two Gāthic occurrences it functions as the partitive-genitive complement of a superlative: Y 29.3 *hātqm . . . aojīštō* ‘the strongest of beings’ and Y 44.10 *hātqm vahištā* ‘the best of beings’. Three out of five occurrences in the Yasna Haptaṅhāiti have the same form: Y 41.2, 3, 4 *hātqm hudāstāmā* ‘the most beneficent of beings’. This is the usage that Narten has called ‘Steigerung’, meaning that it enhances the stature of the superlative. There are two further attestations in the Yasna Haptaṅhāiti in which, however, the term may have a different function. In Y 35.3 *hātqm* has, as apposite to ‘actions’, a partitive-genitive function in Narten’s translation, like its usage with the superlative just listed: *yā hātqm śīiaoθananqm vahištā xīiāt* ‘welche von (allen) Werken, die es gibt, die besten sein dürften’.⁴ Not so according to Kellens’ and Pirart’s translation: ‘les meilleurs des actes (rituels) adressés aux Existants’. *hātqm* is a genitive dependent on ‘the best of ritual gestures’. But interpreting the subjective genitive *hātqm śīiaoθananqm* as ‘addressed to the gods’ is somewhat *ad hoc*, not otherwise attested for a genitively determined *śīiaoθana-*. More importantly, it seems to me that their translation is based on a questionable analysis of the syntax of Y 35.3 *taṭ at varəmaidī ahuramazdā aṣā sīrī hīiaṭ ī mainimadicā vaocōimācā varəzimācā yā hātqm śīiaoθananqm vahištā xīiāt ubōibiīā ahubiīā*, which they translate: “Nous choisissons ceci avec la belle Harmonie, ô Maître Mazdā: penser, dire et accomplir, pour les deux existences, les meilleurs des actes (rituels) adressés aux Existants”. However, *hātqm śīiaoθananqm* does not belong to the relative (*yā . . . vahištā xīiāt ubōibiīā ahubiīā* but qualifies the acc. pl. neuter pronoun *ī* ‘these’, the envisaged object of thinking, speaking and doing, all in the optative. This requires that the verb of the relative also be in the optative (in a modal form, in any case⁵), hence *xīiāt* ‘may be’. The modal character of this latter is lost in Kellens’ and Pirart’s text. In other words, *hātqm* does indeed have, here too, a partitive genitive function apposite to *śīiaoθananqm*, probably with an enhancive nuance: *hātqm śīiaoθananqm* ‘of (all) actions there are’. Thus the phrase can be translated: “O Ahuramazdā, for the sake of beautiful *aṣā*, we indeed commit ourselves to this: that we think, speak and perform (only) those of (all) actions there are which would be best for both existences”.⁶ So here we can fairly confidently say that the participle does not refer to divine beings; nor indeed does it refer to any kind of being.

The last occurrence of *hātqm* to be examined is Y 35.8 *aṣahiīā āaṭ sairī aṣahiīā varəzēnē kahmāicīṭ hātqm jīiṣqm vahištqm ādā ubōibiīā ahubiīā*, which Kellens (1994, p. 110) translates as: “Dans l’union avec *aṣā*, dans le clan d’*aṣā*, à quiconque je dis que l’effort pour gagner la faveur des (dieux)-qui-sent est très bon pour les deux états”. The feminine word *jīiṣā-* is derived from the desiderative present of \sqrt{j} ‘win, conquer’. Narten (1982, p. 89) maintains that it is a verbal noun (‘Verbalabstraktum’) whose literal meaning is something like “des Wunsch, etwas zu gewinnen, Wunsch nach Gewinn”. Kellens and Pirart (1991, p. 134) understand it as “effort pour se concilier la faveur de”, thus as having a verbal force. The desiderative

⁴Cf. Hintze (2007, p. 69): “O Wise Lord, because of bounteous truth we have certainly chosen this: that we may think, speak and perform those existing actions which may be best for both existences”.

⁵See Kellens and Pirart (1990, p. 89).

⁶Instrumental expressing the reason for an action is real in the Gāthās. It occurs, for example, in Y 43.2 (*aṣā*) and Y 47.6 (*dabqazəhā*).

verb itself is used in Y 39.1 *yōi nā jījīšəṅtī* “(the domestic animals) that wish to win our favour” (literally: wish to win us), governing the accusative ‘us’. Therefore, if the noun has a verbal force, one would expect the word it governs to be in the accusative and not in the genitive.⁷ But if *hātqm* cannot be related to *jījīšqm*, where does it fit? Narten (1982, p. 89) makes it the genitive complement of *kahmāciṭ* ‘to whoever’ either in a ‘nominalizing’ role (‘als Substantivierung’), “einem jeden der Seienden (= der Menschen)”, or in an enhancive role (‘als Steigerung’) as in its usage with the superlative, “welchem auch immer von (allen), die es gibt, jedem, den es gibt”. In either case, the phrase refers to human beings. Hintze (2007, p. 91) translates the sentence: “I now tell every (human) being that in union with Truth, (and) in the community of Truth the desire to gain (one’s living) is best for both existences”. According to her, it has the following sense: “each person... should pursue their breadwinning ‘in union with truth’ and ‘in community with truth’. In this way people will do what is best ‘for both existences’, i.e., their physical and spiritual life” (p. 94). So, in effect, the two locatives condition *jījīšā-* “the desire for gain” in her text, whereas in Kellens’ they refer to a “metaphorical clan”, with a more or less descriptive value.⁸ In any event, the meaning of *jījīšā-* “desire to gain the favour of” or “desire to gain one’s living” remains somewhat obscure. As far as our problem goes, however, we may conclude that the words *hātqm jījīšqm* can hardly mean “the desire to gain the favour of anonymous gods”, for aside from the problem related to the government of the verbal base, the sense of the sentence in Kellens’ interpretation remains elusive.

According to Kellens, the significance of Y 35.8, the only one in the YH in the 1st person singular, is to be sought in the context of a tactful management of the potential divine interlocutors in the ritual. “En même temps qu’une déclaration introductive sur l’acte rituel, ce passage [i.e., Y 35.4–8] constitue une précaution préliminaire par laquelle le chantre avertit les dieux que le sacrifice sera réservé à Ahura Mazdā, mais néanmoins très bon pour eux” (1994, p. 113). “Sacrifice is reserved for Ahura Mazdā”, the anonymous gods are told in Y35.4–8, but they are also given to understand that the sacrifice addressed to the supreme god is “nonetheless very good for them”. Kellens’ supposition of the presence of ‘anonymous gods’ in the passage is based, however, not on textual evidence but on his conception that there cannot be any non-divine interlocutor in these liturgical compositions. Here he has to maintain this position in the face of the phrase “best for both existences”, occurring in Y 35.3 and 8, which can only have human beings as an interested party, and in the face of the “man or woman” directly addressed in Y 35.6. Kellens takes the interlocutors of 35.7 *vā* “for you” as referring to anonymous gods, whom are told, according to him, that the sacrifice to Ahura Mazdā and the care of the cow are “very good” for them too. The reasonable position is to rely on the evidence of the discursive context and, in the present case, to see in “for you” human interlocutors unless we have sound proof to the contrary –

⁷Generally speaking, a relation of genitival dependence between an agent and an action, especially with a desiderative base, is understood in the subjective sense. The genitive does not seem to be suitable to express the idea that the ‘gods’ are to undergo the action expressed in *jījīšā-*, for which one expects the noun to have a verbal force; and if one assumes such a force, then the ‘gods’ should appear in the accusative, according to the Y 39.1 phrase quoted in the text.

⁸Kellens and Pirart (1991, p. 125). I cannot identify the referent of *kahmāciṭ* in their text of Y 35.8. In principle, for them, the pronoun should refer to divinities, but their translation (1988, p. 134) suggests that it may refer to those present at the ritual.

and here we do not. Kellens' comments on Y 35.8 (1994, p. 113) are not helpful: "La phrase résume le commentaire théologique qui vient d'être fait sur l'acte rituel en présentant la cérémonie qui va suivre comme une tentative pour gagner la faveur des *haṇt*". The sacrifice, exclusively dedicated to Mazdā and the entities, is 'nonetheless' meant to win the favour of the anonymous gods as well. We have then in Y 35.8 a disjointed situation where these gods are told about the ritual anxiety they create and are simultaneously reassured. What do we do, then, with the explicit intimation that the "effort to win the anonymous gods" is "best for both existences"? In what sense, in the light of Kellens' construction, should we understand it? The idea of a ritual management of potential divine guests and intruders is spurious.⁹

One possible way to understand Y 35.8 is to translate *jījīšā-* as 'endeavour' and relate it to the two locatives via an implied 'be', as Humbach (1991 I, p. 144) does. We would then have something like: "I declare to anyone of (all) those who exist that the endeavour (to be) in the company of *aša* (and) in the community of *aša* (is) the best for both states". I am inclined to think that the two locative phrases do not mean the same thing. Repetition of this sort is unexpected in the compositions of oral traditions. Perhaps one should relate the 'company of *aša*' with the 'mental' (phase of) existence and the 'community of *aša*' with the 'corporeal' (phase of) existence. There may also be a better way to understand the string *kahmāicī hātqm jījīšqm vahištqm* than the one suggested by Kellens. The later Avestan tradition understood the participle as the complement of *kahmāicī*, but it may well be the genitive complement of *vahištqm* in Narten's enhancive role ('als Steigerung'). Thus we would have for Y 35.8: "I declare to whoever (there may be) that the endeavour (to be) in the company of *aša* (and) in the community of *aša* (is) the best of all there are (= of endeavours) for both existences".

The gen. pl. participle *hātqm* seems to have only a rhetorical function (i.e., enhancive role) in all its occurrences in the Old Avestan texts, and does not refer to any particular kind of being, whether divine or human. The relative *γōi hāntī* (without antecedent) probably refers to immortal beings rather than human beings. Narten's semantic argument for discounting the 'specialised' meaning of 'divine beings' is not cogent, since it does not take into account the apparently formulaic nature of the relative phrase. Besides, she does not think the phrase refers to beings in general but specifically to human beings.

2. The adjective *haiθīia-*

The significance of the adjective *haiθīia-* usually translated as 'true' is not easy to grasp. Bartholomae (*AW* 1760) gives the following meanings for both the Avestan word and its Old Persian counterpart *hasīya-*: "der Wirklichkeit entsprechend, wahr, echt, recht". Almost all Avestan scholars translate it either as 'real' or 'true', depending on the context. The only exceptions, as far as I know, are Kellens and Pirart, who (1990, p. 325) translate it as "qui se rapporte aux *haṇt*, culturel". The adjective is derived from the present participle (*haṇt-*) of \sqrt{ah} 'be'. I argued above that one should not automatically derive the meaning of *haiθīia-* from that of the participle *haṇt-*, even if we could show that this latter had a specific meaning, e.g., divine beings, which as we have seen does not seem to be correct. The adjective occurs

⁹See Ahmadi (2013).

only once in the YH, in 35.6 *yaθā āt utā nā vā nāirī vā vaēdā haiθīm aθā haṭ vohū* “Now, as a man or a woman knows *haiθiia-* (action?), so (he or she also knows its) being good”, or more liberally, “just as one knows what a *haiθiia-* action is, so does one also know that it is good”. Following Narten (1986, p. 39), Hintze (2007, p. 82) substantivises both adjectives ‘true or real’ and ‘good’: “Just as now a man or a woman knows what is real, so (do they know) what is really good”. Humbach (1991 I, p. 144) has the adjective *haiθiia-* modify an implied ‘formula’ and translate it as ‘true’. Kellens (1994, p. 110) translates the phrase: “Ainsi qu’un homme ou une femme sait qu’un (acte-rituel) est dû-aux-(dieux-)haṇt, ainsi sait-il qu’un (acte-rituel) est bon”.¹⁰ Translating the term as ‘true’ or ‘real’ does not make its significance clear. The question would then become what ‘real’ or ‘true’ means to the composers of the Gāthās or the YH. Generally speaking, we may be certain that these words had a different sense for the ancients than they do for us. Kellens’ attempt to give *haiθiia-* a more specific meaning seems to be in part based in the recognition that words such as ‘true’ or ‘real’ or ‘good’ are traps for the unwary interpreter. What does indeed the phrase, “just as one knows what is real, so one knows what is really good”, mean? The word *haiθīm* is either a substantivised adjective (‘what is real’, so Hintze) or qualifies a noun in ellipsis. The context speaks for the latter. Why ignore the evidence of the context that strongly suggests ‘action’ as the underlying noun? As for reading ‘action’ as the underlying noun, we have the ‘unit’¹¹ Y 35.3–4 where the worshippers announce that they would undertake only the “actions that would be best for both existences” (35.3), emphatically recalled and placed in a new context in 35.4 ⁺ *ad-āiš tāiš śiuaθanāiš γāiš vahištāiš* ‘by (doing) these, (namely) these best actions’.¹² In Y 35.7 the anaphoric ‘that’ (*taṭ*) refers to a neuter noun (underlying *vahištəm* ‘the best’), which is the object of an accomplishment (*vəṛəziāmahi* ‘we carry out’), i.e., it is understood as an activity. Thus there is strong contextual support for reading ‘action’ as the underlying noun of the adjective *haiθiia-* in Y 35.6. In the same vein, *vohū* must be an adjective qualifying a neuter noun. I am not certain what “the good” in the absolute sense or “what is really good” could mean in the passage, but it is not necessary to speculate about it. The whole context, as we have seen, is concerned with ‘actions’ that are ‘good’ or ‘best for both states’ (YH 35.3, 35.7, 35.8). It is thus reasonable to let the discursive context supply the underlying neuter noun, i.e., action. I have argued that *yaθā... aθā...* is a logical conjunction.¹³ The knowledge that an action is ‘good’ is grounded in the knowledge that that action is *haiθiia-*. It seems to me that in view of Y 35.3 and 8, the neuter adjective *vohū* ‘good’ should be understood as “good action for both existences”. With this assumption, the substance of the phrase becomes: “as one knows an action to be *haiθiia-*, so one knows it is good for both existences”. In other words, the *haiθiia-* action is good for both existences.

¹⁰Surprisingly Kellens is content with “good ritual gesture”. What does ‘good’ mean here? Since he normally understands it as ‘divine’, our phrase from 35.6 becomes a tautology: “just as one knows a ritual gesture is due-to-divinities so one knows it is divine (or sacred)”. Y 35.6, in his translation (1994, p. 112), continues: “mais il faut aussi que, pour une part, il le fasse pour lui-même et, pour l’autre, qu’il suggère aux (*haṇt*) de faire ce geste comme il est”. Since Kellens (2000, pp. 101–102) generally maintains that ritual gestures are potent imitations of the creative actions of the gods in primordial times, the idea of ‘suggesting’ to the gods that they should “faire ce geste comme il est” seems somewhat strange.

¹¹See Hintze (2007, p. 76): “Y 35.3–4 thus constitute one unit”.

¹²Emendation and translation are from Hintze (2007, p. 74).

¹³See Ahmadi (2012).

The term occurs a number of times in the Gāthās, some of which may help us take our analysis further. In Y 31.6 we are told that the *haiθiia-* ‘formula’ (*mąθra-*) secures integrity (or health), *aša* and immortality (*yim hauruuatātō ašahiia aməratātascā*). In Y 44.6b–d’ the adjective is used of a statement: *γā frauuaxšiiā, yezi tā aθā haiθiia / ašəm šiiəθanāiš, dəbqzaitī ārmaitiš / taiβiō xšaθrəm, vohū cinas manajhā* “whether these (words) I am going to pronounce in this way (are) *haiθiia*: Right-mindedness with her actions consolidates *aša* (and) through good thinking provides power for you”. We can gather from these passages that *haiθiia-* can apply to verbal expressions of a special kind, and that, in one case (Y 31.6), the expression seems to have an eschatological dimension. It is not clear though whether the eschatological valence belongs to it because of its being *haiθiia-* or being a *mąθra*; in the latter case, the adjective may be understood in the sense of ‘genuine’: one looks to the ‘true’ *mąθra* to sustain one’s eschatological hope.¹⁴

Aside from these two, there are nine attestations of the adjective in the Gāthās, one of which, Y 53.6, is in a stanza that is completely obscure.¹⁵ The remaining eight may be divided into three groups. Three occurrences are in the concluding stanzas of three Gāthās (Y 34.15, 46.19, 50.11), in a stereotyped lexical and discursive environment, and, significantly, in two with a noun in ellipsis, or else with *haiθiia-* substantivised. The second group (Y 43.3, 51.13, 30.5) consists of stanzas that directly or indirectly relate the adjective to the phrase ‘straight paths’. The third group contains two passages that describe seemingly eschatological scenes: in one (Y 34.6) the adjective in the accusative is probably used adverbially, and in the other (Y 49.11) it is found in an imprecation. In the latter we find the souls (*uruuqno*) of the partisans of *druj* (*drəguuatō*) confronting them with foul food (*akāiš x’ arəθāiš*), who are envisaged to be “true guests in the house of *druj*” (*drūjō dəmānē haiθiia... astaiō*). I will come back to this in the end. The context of Y 34.6 *haiθim* seems to be eschatological or ecstatic: *yezi aθā stā haiθim* “since you (i.e., *Mazdā*, *aša* and *vohu-* *manah-*) are in truth such (i.e., as described in the previous stanza)”. The gods are ‘in truth’ powerful and protective.

The second group (Y 43.3, 30.5 and 51.13) sheds decisive light on the significance of *haiθiia-*.

Y 43.3 *aγ huuō vanhəuš, vahiiō nā aibi.jamiāt*
γā nā əzəzūš, sauuaγhō paθō sīšōit
ahiiā aγhəuš, astuuatō manajhascā
haiθiāiəng + ā + stiš, γəng ā.sacētī ahuō
arədrō θβāuuqs, huzəntušə spēntō mazdā

¹⁴Preoccupation with ‘immortality’ in the sense of life beyond death seems to be an Indo-European heritage. See, for instance, Malamoud, (1996, pp. 195–206), and (2002, pp. 19–33); Frame (1978); West (1983); Detienne (1999); and from a different perspective, Eliade (1964, pp. 375–427). The idea of a ‘vitalization’ of earthly life (making it immortal?) is present in the Gāthās. One can legitimately describe the perspective as eschatological if it involves conquering death. The ‘formula of integrity and immortality’ of Y 31.6 probably refers to an eschatological hope. ‘Integrity’ must be understood within the semantic horizon of ‘immortality’ (the supreme god enjoys both immortality and integrity, i.e., the two together describes the condition of divine existence. Cf. Y 31.21, 44.17, 45.10 and 51.7).

¹⁵Y 53.6, with its five manuscript lines instead of the regular four, could be a composite of the remnants of two stanzas, so Humbach (1991 II, p. 243). It also contains a few incomprehensible and unexplainable words, probably due to disturbed transmission. For a discussion of the difficulties, see Kellens and Pirart (1991, pp. 270–272).

So, may he accede to (even) better (existence) than the good (existence), the man who could teach us the straight paths of vitalisation of this corporeal existence as well as (that) of the mind – the true (paths leading) to beings¹⁶, where a lord resides, (who is), having attained the heavens¹⁷, like you, loyal (and) vitalizing, O Mazdā.

The adjective *haiθiia-* (acc. pl. masc.) plainly qualifies the “straight paths of vitalization”, but used in its own verse line with the noun in ellipsis. There are two interesting questions one could ask about its usage in this passage. Firstly, one wonders whether the distraction of the adjective from the noun with which it belongs and its placement right after the ‘mind’ is significant. Does it, in other words, qualify the straight paths of salvation exclusively, as these bear on the ‘existence of the mind’? The differentiation between the corporeal state and the mental state is a fundamental conceptual distinction in Gāthic system of thought, and thus the choice of contiguous positions for the expressions may have some conceptual significance. This question of a possible elective affinity of *haiθiia-* with the ‘mental state’ is also at stake in the goal of the paths of vitalization that are *haiθiia-*: they lead to beings (*stiš*). This noun from \sqrt{ah} ‘be’ seems to mean ‘being’ in the concrete and not abstract sense in the passage – a development that is not unusual for verbal abstract nouns in *-ti*.¹⁸ It is hard to know what or who these ‘beings’ are; Y 43.13 suggests that they may constitute an immortal realm: 43.13c-e’ *arəθā vōiždiiāi, kāmahiia tēm mōi dātā / darəgahiia γaoš, γēm vā naēciš dārəšt itē / vairiā stōiš, γā θβahmī xšaθrōi vācī* “so that I can attain the objects of my desire, fulfil for me this (desire) for a lasting life, for which no one has dared¹⁹ to approach you, (the desire) for the choice existence that is said (to be) in your realm”. The terms in which the ‘existence’ in question is described leave little doubt that it is the immortal life that is meant. It is not clear whether the existence imagined in this passage is that of a mental state in which the departed soul continues its existence or a ‘splendid’ earthly existence purged from death and other evils. In any event, from Y 43.3 we can conclude that *haiθiia-* is used of the paths that lead to immortal life.

This conclusion may be tested in 51.13.

Y 51.13 *tā drəguuatō marədaitī, daēnā ərəzaoš haiθīm*
yehiia uruuā xraodaitī, cinuuatō ×pəratāu ākā
x^vāiš šiiəoθanāiš hizuuascā, ašahiia nqsuuā pəθō

¹⁶The most important Persian Pahlavi Yasna manuscripts (Pt₄, Mf₄ and Mf₁), the best Indian Pahlavi Yasna K₅, and the important Pahlavi-Sanskrit Yasna S₁ have *ā.stiš*.

¹⁷Compare Heesterman (1962, pp. 18–24) for *arədra-* (< $\sqrt{rād}$): having succeeded in sacrifice, e.g., conquering death.

¹⁸See Benveniste (1975, pp. 93–95).

¹⁹See Hintze (2007, pp. 215–216). I accept her reasons for reading *dārəšt* as a 3rd.sg.root.aor. of \sqrt{dar} ‘dare’, with Insler (1975, p. 238), rather than a 3rd.sg. s-aor.act. of \sqrt{dar} ‘hold, support’. If one reads *ā.stiš* in Y 43.3 as *+ā stiš* (AW 1592) one should ask what ‘beings’ might mean. Given the context of Y 43.2–3 (the straight paths of the vitalization of existence taught by the knowledgeable man, etc.) and the evidence of Y 43.13 where *sti-* seems to have the sense of an ideal existence, I think it is warranted to understand ‘beings’ as those who exist in the divine realm, i.e., those who live without the limitation and ravages of time-bound existence. Given the philological difficulties with the phrase *ā.stiš*, and the fact that the meaning of the passage (Y 43.2–3) only marginally depends on its meaning, it is reasonable to let the light of the discursive context shed on its form and semantics.

Thus the vision-soul of the partisan of *dmj*, (who) has disappeared from the path of *aša* thanks to his actions and (the actions) of his tongue and whose soul facing the Collector's Bridge is enraged, neglects the true (action) of the straight (path).

Here, too, we find the adjective connected with the 'straight (path)'²⁰, but it does not qualify it. One can perhaps speculate, on the basis of 53.2dd" *dāyjhō ərəzūš paθō, γqm daēnqm ahurō, saōšiantō dadāt* "the lord places the vision-soul of the vitalizer onto the straight paths of boon", that in Y 51.13 the straight (path) refers to 'boon' rather than 'vitalization'. Nonetheless the theme of vitalisation is present in Y 53.2 in the figure of the *saōšiant-*. The supreme god makes the psychopompic 'vision-soul' (*daēnā-*) of the *saōšiant-* the conduit of the 'boon'. The figure places the 'boon' in an eschatological perspective.²¹ In Y 51.13 we are told that the *drəguuant* is blind to the *haiθiia-* action which constitutes (or places one on) the 'straight path' in an unmistakably eschatological context, where the *drəguuant*'s soul is portrayed suffering in the afterlife as a result of his negligence in the earthly life. The failure must be understood against this background, i.e., it concerns the afterlife. The turn away from *aša* lies at the basis of the damnation of the *drəguuant*'s soul in Y 51.13, and is associated with the 'worst acts' committed by the '*drəguuant* intuition' in Y 30.5:

Y 30.5 *aiiā mainiuuā varatā, γē drəguuā acištā vərəziū*
ašəm mainiuš spəništō, γē xraoždištōγg asēnō vastē
γācā xšnaošən ahurəm, haiθiiaš šiaθanāiš fraorəz mazdqm

From these two intuitions, the *drəguuant* one chooses to practice the worst (acts), (while) the most vitalizing spirit, who is clothed in the hardest stones, (chooses) *aša*, and (so do those) who resolutely satisfy Ahura Mazdā by (their) true actions.

Choosing *aša* involves undertaking *haiθiia-* actions. In Y 30.5 and 51.13, two kinds of action are set against one another: the action (the 'worst' kind, according to Y 30.5) that is part and

²⁰Y 30.5 tells us that 'choosing *aša*' involves carrying out 'true actions' that please the supreme god. Conversely, according to Y 51.13, the *drəguuant* "has disappeared from the path of *aša* thanks to his (own) actions and (the actions) of his tongue". Admittedly *ərəzəoš haiθim* in Y 51.13a' is difficult to interpret since it seems to contain two elliptical nouns underlying the two adjectives. Now *ərəzu-* only qualifies *paθ-* in the Gāthās – in the other instances in the plural, it is true (see *AW* 353). Some scholars think that it occurs in the singular in Y 33.6 where it supposedly refers to a person. But this is not the case. The evidence of manuscripts is not decisive for either the singular or the plural reading (*AW* 353) of the term 'straight' in Y 33.6, but the passage in question (Y 33.5-6) placed along the parallel text of Y 43.2-3 makes the plural reading much more likely than the singular one: 'straight (paths)' perceived by the priest 'on the basis of the best intuition', etc. The reading in the singular that has the adjective qualify the 'priest' yields e.g. "I, who (am) an (officiating) priest, straightforward in truth" Humbach (1991 I, p. 137), or the "priest who is just in harmony with truth" Insler (1975, p. 51). Does it mean something like: "the priest speaks the truth"? But then the actual expression would hardly be appropriate for the meaning. Does it mean "in his conformity with truth/justice the priest is truthful/just"? Why the pleonasm? In my opinion the singular reading does not produce much sense. For the noun underlying *haiθim* we have a few options: 'action' or 'formula' or 'Lohn' (so *AW* 353). The first is the most likely one because of the parallel contrast in Y 30.5 between the 'worst (actions)' and the 'true actions' involved in choosing *aša*: in Y 51.13, too, the 'true (action) of the straight (path)' is contrasted with the actions that remove one from the path of *aša*.

²¹For a short account of the career of this figure in the Avesta, see Hintze (1995, pp. 77-97 and 1999, pp. 76-78). Pirart (2006, p. 105) maintains that the *saōšiant-* is an 'eschatological combatant', born of the postmortem union of the pious person's 'soul' and 'vision-soul'. An army of such fighters will revitalize life to a state of perfection in the end of time (p. 110). Although I cannot go into the details here, I think the idea that current life is defective or damaged; that it can be restored (the means are not at issue here); that this divinely inspired undertaking would make earthly life perfect, and the 'mental' afterlife of the soul, blissful – this idea is eschatological, and it is present in all these aspects in the Gāthās.

parcel of the abandonment of the path of *aṣā*, on the one hand, and on the other, the ‘true action’ that constitutes the ‘straight path’ of ‘vitalisation’ or ‘boon’ (according to Y 51.13, and pleases Mazdā according to Y 30.5). The former prepares a horrid afterlife, the latter leads to a blissful one.²²

The adjective *haiθiia-* significantly occurs in three Gāthā-concluding stanzas. In all these stanzas the adjective appears with *fəraša-* ‘splendid’ or ‘brilliant’ that seems to mark a particular existence or state. The syntax in all of them is somewhat ambiguous. Y 34.15cc’ is an independent statement with the verb ($\sqrt{dā}$) in the injunctive aorist, which presents the action from the outside, e.g., as a fact: *xšmākā xšaθrā ahurā, fərašaṃ vasnā haiθiīḍm dā ahūm*. Most scholars translate this verse as something like: O Lord, through your power (you) make real at will (or in accordance with our wish) an existence that is brilliant. So Insler (1975, p. 59) has: “By your rule, Lord, Thou shalt truly heal this world in accord with our wish”. He derives *fəraša-* from *fīa* \sqrt{ar} : **fīarta-* and translates ‘healed’, and interprets *haiθiīḍm* as an adverb.²³ Lommel (1971, p. 89) translates: “Durch eure Herrschaft mache, o Herr, nach (deinem) Willen das Dasein wirklich herrlich”, also reading *haiθiīḍm* as an adverb. Humbach (1991 I, p. 143) has: “Through Your power make real the existence (which is) brilliant in (my) imagination, O Ahura”. He (1991 II, p. 115) maintains that *vasnā* cannot mean ‘at will’, i.e., derived from \sqrt{vas} ‘wish’, since this would give **vašnā* as in Old Persian *vašnā* ‘in accordance with one’s wish’. The Gāthic term is identical in form to the Vedic *vaśná-* ‘value, price’ (EWA II, 535), whose sense also seems to fit: ‘splendid or brilliant in value’.²⁴ Kellens (2013, p. 82) suggests to derive *vasna-* from \sqrt{vah} ‘illuminate’. The term would then mean something like ‘heavenly light’. One way to read the verbal phrase is ‘render *haiθiia-* an existence (that is) splendid’, where one would translate the adjective as ‘real’, so ‘realise an existence (that is) splendid’. In Y 30.9, however, we have the poet expressing his wish *tōi vaēm xūāmā yōi im fərašaṃ kərənaon ahūm* “may we be those who will make this existence splendid”. It seems to me that the attraction of reading Y 34.15c’ *haiθiīḍm dā* as ‘make real’ or ‘realise’ is due to the preconception that one knows what ‘real’ means in the phrase, and that ‘making real an ideal existence’ is an understandable way of expressing an eschatological undertaking. But one may as well read the verbal phrase, ‘make existence *haiθiia-* (and) splendid in value (or with heavenly light)’, which would agree with Y 30.9. If this reading is right, the adjective characterises a certain kind of existence.²⁵ We must keep in mind that the aorist stem of $\sqrt{dā}$ with the supreme god as the subject seems to describe the latter’s creative activity in the Gāthās.

In Y 46.19 *haiθiia-* refers to a noun in ellipsis which is the object of \sqrt{varz} ‘perform, accomplish’: *yō mōi aṣāṭ, haiθīm hacā varəšaītī / zaraθuštrāi, hīiaṭ vasnā fərašō.təməm / ahmāi*

²²See Kellens (1995, pp. 29–33).

²³See Insler (1975, p. 172). This etymology has not been accepted by other scholars. See Bailey (1971, pp. vii–xvi).

²⁴The word *vasna-* occurs three times in the Gāthās in strictly similar discursive and linguistic environments (Y 34.15, 46.19, 50.11): always next to the adjective *fəraša-* ‘splendid’ or its superlative. If the word meant ‘at will’ (from \sqrt{vas}), an adverbial, it is hard to understand why it has a fixed position next to the adjective in all its occurrences. But if *vasna-* means something like ‘in value’ (so Humbach and Skjærvø), its consistent attachment to the adjective ‘splendid’ is understandable.

²⁵The adjective *haiθiia.dā-* in the phrase *daēna māzdaiiasniš... haiθiia.dātəma* from Yt 11.3 can hardly mean ‘that makes (the splendid existence) real’, but ‘that establishes true (existence)’.

mīždām, *hanəntē parāhūm* ‘(for him) who will have accomplished for me, Zarathuštra, the *haiθiia-* (act) oriented to *aša-* for him who (thus) earns (it) the prize which is most splendid in value: a (desirable) existence beyond!’ The verb $\sqrt{\text{varz}}$ does not mean ‘make’ but ‘perform, accomplish’ or ‘work (the land)’. So the verbal phrase *haiθīm... varəšaitī... hūiaṭ... fərašō.təməm* cannot mean ‘make real... what is most wonderful’. *haiθīm* must refer to an activity or a state.²⁶ The prize of the ‘life beyond’ must mean a desirable afterlife, especially in view of the relative clause qualifying it.²⁷ The relative *hūiaṭ vasnā fərašō.təməm* can hardly be the accusative complement of *varəšaitī*. Rather, it describes the envisaged prize. In Y 34.15 the supreme god is imagined to use his divine power to render existence *haiθiia-* and heavenly; here the one who carries out the ‘*haiθiia-* action’ (for Zarathuštra) is promised a ‘higher life’.²⁸

Finally: Y 50.11c-d’ *dātā aṅhəuš, arədaṭ vohū manəḅhā / haiθiiauuarəštqm, hūiaṭ vasnā fərašō.təməm* “the creator of existence will foster through good thinking the *haiθiia-*work (and thus) what is most splendid in value”. The manuscripts have either *haiθiiauuarəštqm* or *haiθiia.uuarəštqm*. Kellens and Pirart read ⁺*haiθiia + varəštqm*, the former word as an elliptical adjective in the instrumental for ‘with a cultic gesture’ and the latter as the 3rd sg. aor. imp. of $\sqrt{\text{varz}}$ ‘accomplish’. They accordingly interpret *arədaṭ* as an adverb, ‘remarquablement’. Their translation is: “Que l’instaurateur de l’existence (rituelle) accomplisse remarquablement (la formule) par la divine Pensée et par an (acte) cultuel qui est très plantureux...” They suggest that the noun in ellipsis is *šiiəθana-*, which for them means ‘ritual gesture’. We then have the pleonastic phrase ‘cultic ritual gesture’, characterised as the most splendid. Kellens’ and Pirart’s objection, that *arədaṭ* ($\sqrt{\text{ard}}$ ‘promote, foster’, cf. Vedic *ardh* ‘promote, attain’²⁹) cannot be a verb since a subjunctive is untypical in a principal clause, is not decisive on its own. The subjunctive aorist is used to envisage a future accomplishment, as it is in Y 46.19. The action in the aorist subjunctive is reduced to a fact and imagined as a future event. Thus

²⁶In Y 43.8 after first giving his name, Zarathuštra characterises himself as ‘one of true hostility toward the *dəguuaṅt*’ (*haiθiio.duuəšā... dəguuaūtē*). The adjective *haiθiia-* in the possessive compound *haiθiio.duuəšāh-* ‘true hostility’ and in the phrase from 49.11 *haiθiia... astaiio* ‘true guests’ cannot mean something like ‘genuine’ or, as Humbach (1991 I, p. 182) has for the latter, ‘welcome’. It is not a question of ‘really’ being (e.g. hostile) what one appears to be – before a god whom no one can deceive (cf. Y 45.4). Humbach’s ‘welcome’ is his own contribution to make an otherwise awkward ‘real’ plausible, but *haiθiia-* does not mean ‘welcome’ (meaning ‘deserving?’); and one feels justified in thinking that if the poet had in mind a notion like ‘deserving’, he would have used the word. Kellens and Pirart (1990, p. 325) translate *haiθiio.duuəšāh-* as ‘qui manifeste une hostilité culturelle’ in accordance with their general understanding of the adjective as ‘cultic’.

²⁷A neuter relative pronoun without antecedent and unsubordinated is anomalous in the Gāthās. Humbach (1991 I, p. 173) translates Y 46.19: ‘He who, in accordance with truth, will make real for me, for Zarathuštra, (that) which (is) most brilliant in (my) imagination, etc.’; Hintze (2004, p. 37) translates: ‘(You,) who, on the basis of truth, will make real for me, Zarathuštra, what is most wonderful at will, etc.’; Kellens and Pirart (1988, p. 164) have: “Celui qui accomplit au bénéfice de Zarathuštra mon (acte) cultuel harmonieux, qui est très plantureux, etc.”; Insler (1975, 87) has “The person who, really in accordance with truth, shall bring to realisation for me, Zarathuštra, what is most healing according to (our) wish, etc.” Insler’s ‘really in accordance with truth’ is unconvincing: *haiθiia-* merely adding emphasis to the adverbial ‘in accordance with truth’. One must be able to account for the elective affinity of the term with eschatological contexts. There are two further problems with his translation: the unexplained relative pronoun without antecedent, and the future tense of the verb. The aorist presents the action as reduced to a fact (e.g., in a perfective aspect); the subjunctive (here) expresses the process as envisaged in mind: in English *varəšaitī* should be translated as something like ‘will have carried out’. The relative *hūiaṭ* must refer to the ‘prize’. Again, the verb $\sqrt{\text{varz}}$ means ‘accomplish (an activity)’ (cf. *AW* 1374) and not ‘make (a thing)’.

²⁸It is also possible that *haiθīm* constitutes an elliptical figura etymologica with $\sqrt{\text{varz}}$, especially in view of Y 50.11.

²⁹See *EWA* I, 118.

it seems that the adjective *haiθiia-* qualifies a certain activity that plays a part in a context which may justifiably be described as eschatological in view of the parallel phrase “what is most splendid”.

3. Conclusion

So, what can we learn about *haiθiia-* from these passages? In Y 35.6 it qualifies the elliptical ‘action’ that is good (for both existences); in Y 31.6 it describes the *maqra* of immortality, integrity and *aša*. In Y 34.6, it is said that the protective power of Mazdā and the other gods truly belongs to their way of being. In Y 43.3 the adjective describes the ‘paths of vitalization’ of the two existences that lead to the realm of ‘beings’, and in Y 51.13 it qualifies the elliptical ‘action’ that constitutes the ‘straight path’ of ‘boon’ or ‘vitalization’. In Y 34.15, *haiθiia-* qualifies the ‘existence’ that Mazdā is expected to establish. In Y 46.19 it describes a particular type of action that earns the agent an eschatological reward. In Y 50.11 it qualifies a sort of activity or undertaking that is placed in an eschatological horizon. In the only passage where the adjective is used in a negative context, 49.11dd’ *drūjō dāmānē, haiθiia aḡhən astaiiō*, the *drəguuants* are imagined ending up as ‘*haiθiia-* guests’ in the ‘house of *druj*’. As we saw, Kellens and Pirart translate the adjective as ‘cultic’. For the phrase *drūjō dāmānē haiθiia ... astaiiō*, this translation would give ‘cultic guests in the house of *druj*’ or, as elsewhere Kellens (1994, p. 112) translates the adjective as ‘sacred’ or ‘due to the gods’, the phrase would become ‘sacred guests in the house of *druj*’, both of which are senseless. In order to get an acceptable meaning Kellens and Pirart read *haiθiia* in the inst. sg.: guests in the house of *druj* ‘par leur (acte) cultuel’ (1989, 174), thus ascribing a singular ‘action’ or ‘gesture’ to a multitude of agents. Now, if this were the case, it would be the only one in the Gāthās. Every time there is talk of a plurality of persons achieving or suffering a result through their ‘action’, we always find this latter in the plural (cf. Y 30.5, 31.20, 46.11, 51.13). Therefore *haiθiia* in Y 49.11 should be read in the nominative plural and not the instrumental, if one were to give due weight to this regular collocation.³⁰ The usage of *haiθiia-* in the phrase *drūjō dāmānē haiθiia ... astaiiō* ‘true guests in the house of *druj*’ must be placed in the perspective of the fate of mortals in the afterlife. The image that *drūjō dāmānē haiθiia aḡhən astaiiō* conveys stands out against an array of damning vices (49.11a–b’ *aṭ dušō.xšaθrēng, duš.šiiāoθanēng dužuuacayhō / duždaēnēng, dužmanayhō drəguuatō*) which prepare the final outcome of “lasting existence in darkness” and “bad food” (cf. Y 31.20) in the “house of *druj*” for the departed soul. The audience already knows what fate is in store for the culprit, and the phrase *drūjō dāmānē, haiθiia aḡhən astaiiō*, with the verb in the subjunctive, concludes the line of thought. The congruence of the image and the background leaves no doubt as to the meaning of our term: *haiθiia-* refers to a permanent state in the afterlife.

What is ‘true’ has an eschatological valence because the adjective describes the conditions beyond the transient earthly life. ‘In truth’ means pertaining to this state of being beyond time. The activities described as ‘true’ are those that transform ‘existence’ into a desirable state beyond mortal conditions, probably what it was like when first created by Mazdā. Performing

³⁰Inslar (1975, p. 97) has “they shall be the true guests in the House of Deceit”. The whole point, however, is to know what ‘true’ can mean here.

'true actions' is an eschatological occupation. One can hardly doubt the eschatological horizon of the usage of *haiθiia-* 'true' or 'real' in the passages examined. The term is thus to be understood in a way akin to the Platonic 'what truly is', including the sense of an existence beyond death where the 'saved' soul continues to exist in a state of permanence ('being'). Once placed in an eschatological perspective, the potency of the 'true' word or action, a commonplace of ancient Indo-European cultures³¹, bears on the state beyond mortal conditions. The transient life has a happy ending for the adherents of the 'true' order of creation but leads to "lasting laceration for the followers of *druj*" (Y 30.11). amir.ahmadi@monash.edu

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³¹See, for example, Detienne 1999.

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